

Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge

July 27 – August 2, 2014 [Issue 12]

Photo Credit: USFWS/Cooper Crose

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Photo of the Week



Photo Credit: USFWS/Yianni Laskaris

A Message from Monomoy

Look out! Staging shorebirds and migrants continue to arrive in large numbers to the Monomoy Islands. From whimbrels and godwits to red knots and terns, staging count surveys are next on the list of jobs to do. Even though a handful of plots remain in the tern colony, field camp officially closed August 1st as plover and American oystercatcher productivity monitoring have come to an end.

Sadly, an end to breeding season also brings an end to field season. The Monomoy family would like to thank the interns and volunteers for all their hard work during the 2014 field season. We could not have done it without you. Monomoy would especially like to thank Yianni Laskaris who will be leaving for graduate school next week. Yianni has dedicated his last 3 summers to Monomoy and has served as both the plover technician and the saltmarsh integrity technician. Good luck and safe travels!

2014 Field Season Update

This is a weekly synopsis of biological activities on South Monomoy, North Monomoy, and Minomoy Islands. Information within this report is subject to change. For up to date information, please contact Refuge Staff.

Bird Sightings

Double-crested cormorant	Black-bellied plover
Great black-backed gull	Semipalmated plover
Herring gull	Semipalmated sandpiper
Ring-billed gull	Sanderling
Glaucous gull	Dunlin
Iceland gull	Snowy owl
Laughing gull	Great egret
Bonaparte's gull	White-throated sparrow
Willet	Turkey vulture
Greater yellowlegs	Peregrine falcon
Lesser yellowlegs	Red-winged blackbird
Black-crowned night heron	Common grackle
Yellow-crowned night heron	Ruddy turnstone
Tricolored heron	Wilson's plover
Green heron	Red Knot
American bittern	Seaside sparrow
White-rumped sandpiper	Northern gannet
Least sandpiper	Common loon
Pectoral Sandpiper	Common eider
Hudsonian Godwit	American black duck
Marbled Godwit	Magnolia warbler
Short-billed dowitcher	Cedar waxwing
Black tern	Brant goose
Arctic tern	Eastern kingbird
Spotted sandpiper	Willow flycatcher
Whimbrel	Barn swallow
Razorbill	Black Scoter
Mississippi kite	Gull-billed tern
Glossy Ibis	

Bird Activity

Piping Plovers (PIPL)

Preliminary numbers report 44 breeding pairs on the refuge this season; 41 on South Monomoy, 2 on Minimoy, and 1 on North Monomoy. South Monomoy fledged 41 chicks between 18 broods while Minimoy yielded 1 successful brood with 2 fledged chicks. All broods are now fledged on the refuge.

American Oystercatchers (AMOY)

AMOY breeding season brings in 14 oystercatcher chicks between 8 broods on the refuge. South Monomoy leads with 7 chicks between 3 broods while North Monomoy trails with 3 chicks between 2 broods. One nest remains on North Monomoy over a week past its expected hatch date.

Minimoy was checked once this week on 7/30 and revealed a suspected chick from a third brood. Minimoy now has 4 chicks between 3 broods.

Staff is anticipating the arrival of staging individuals in the coming weeks.

Common Terns (COTE)

Productivity continues to wind down within the tern colony, with 23 productivity plots closed, and 10 plots remaining as of August 1st. Staff will continue to monitor remaining plots until the last remaining nests have hatched and B-census chicks have fledged/reached 23 days. Additionally, kleptoparasitism stints ended on July 30th as staff notes the colony emptier and less aggressive with many hatch years and adults loafing on the flats.

Staff will start official staging count surveys on 8/4.

Roseate Terns (ROST)

Staff has noticed the return of many staging roseate terns at the south tip of South Monomoy on 8/1. Three ROSTs with yellow PFRs banded in Connecticut/New York and 2 ROSTs with red PFRs banded in Maine/New Hampshire/Canada were located amongst a staging count of 45-79 terns, half of which were roseate adults and hatch years. Staff also noted a ROST with a 6-band color combination within the flock.

Official staging count surveys are expected to start August 4th in hopes of re-sighting the roseate terns making their way over to their staging grounds on the refuge. Staff is

anticipating the arrival of many ROSTs in the coming weeks.

Black Skimmers (BLSK)

No new information to report.

Least Terns (LETE)

A small group of LETEs were found nesting on Minimoy Island this past week, and a brief count turned up 6 nests. This was the first time LETE have been observed nesting on Minimoy. High nest predation on adjacent South Beach may be the cause of this late season shift.

Laughing Gulls (LAGU)

No new information to report.

Roseate habitat restoration Project

Staff will be taking photos of the plots next week in order to track goldenrod growth progress. More information will follow in next weeks update.

iPlover

Staff has recorded 53 plover nests with iPlover to date with 1 new entry this week. Staff expects to record 4 more iPlover entries of used nests next week.

Salt Marsh Integrity

The final week of nekton sampling begins, with 14 more sampling sites to complete at Hospital Pond between August 6th and 7th. All 17 sites on Minimoy and 3 sites on Morris Island were completed this past week. Of note was the biggest catch to date on Morris Island, 931 fish!! A very unexpected catch for our smallest salt marsh unit! We would like to give a big thank you to all the volunteers who signed up to help during the nekton sampling window!

Sites at Minimoy and Morris Island followed the trend seen on North Monomoy, with the 3 most abundant species being common mummichog, striped killifish, and Atlantic silverside.

Water level data continues to be collected at Hospital Pond, while the levellogger at Morris Island was collected. Data has shown that Morris Island experiences infrequent tidal inundation, and receives little tidal influx near during neap tides.

Current & Upcoming Events

SMI: Nekton Sampling Window

Bio Discussion: Salt Marshes and SMI

Tern Staging Counts

MRBS Opens

Shorebird Surveys

July 22-Aug 7

August 5

August

August 14

August 15

AUGUST 2014						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	1	2	3	4	5	6